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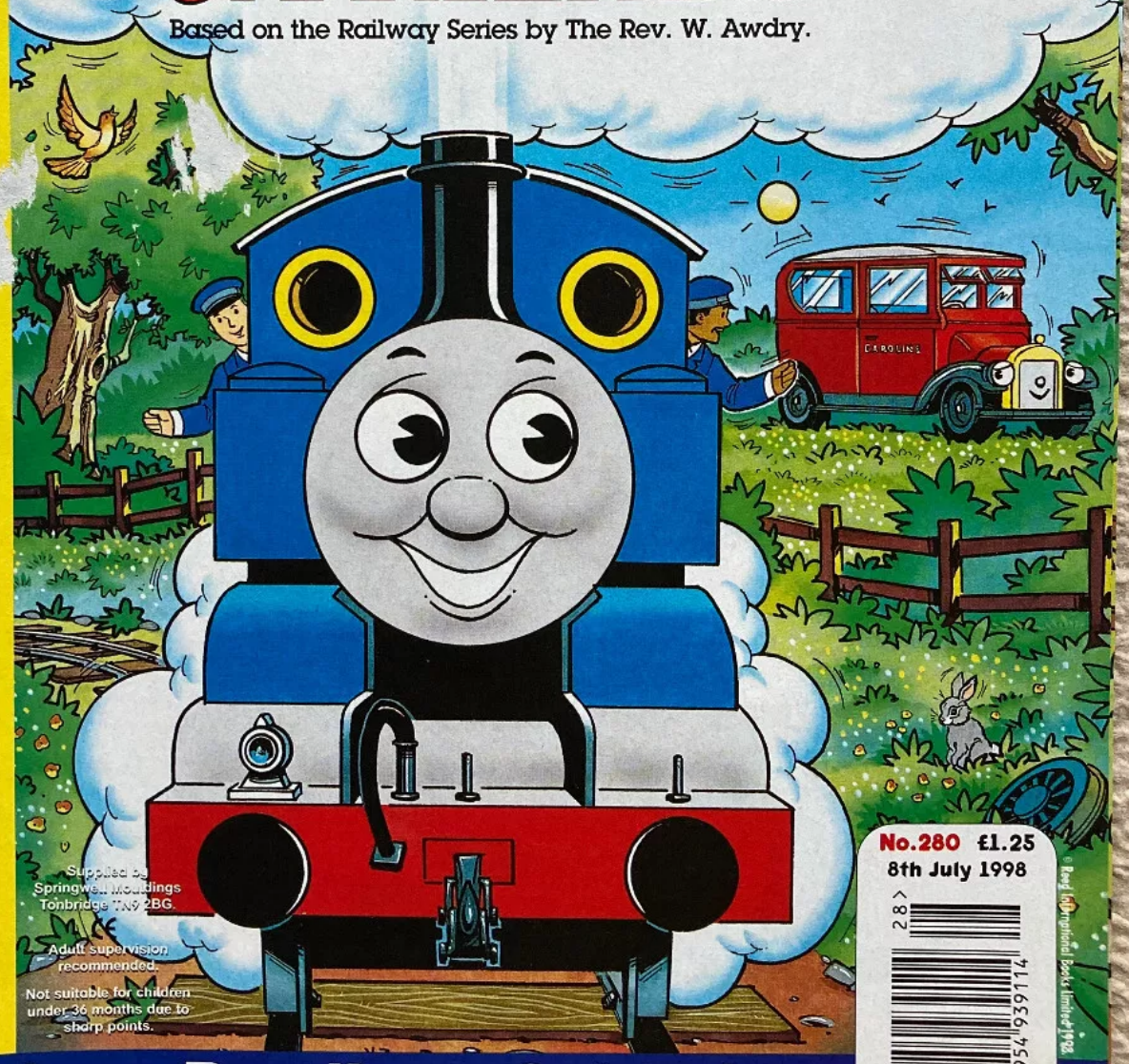
Based on the Railway Series by The Rev. W. Awdry.



THOMAS THE TANK ENGINE & FRIENDS

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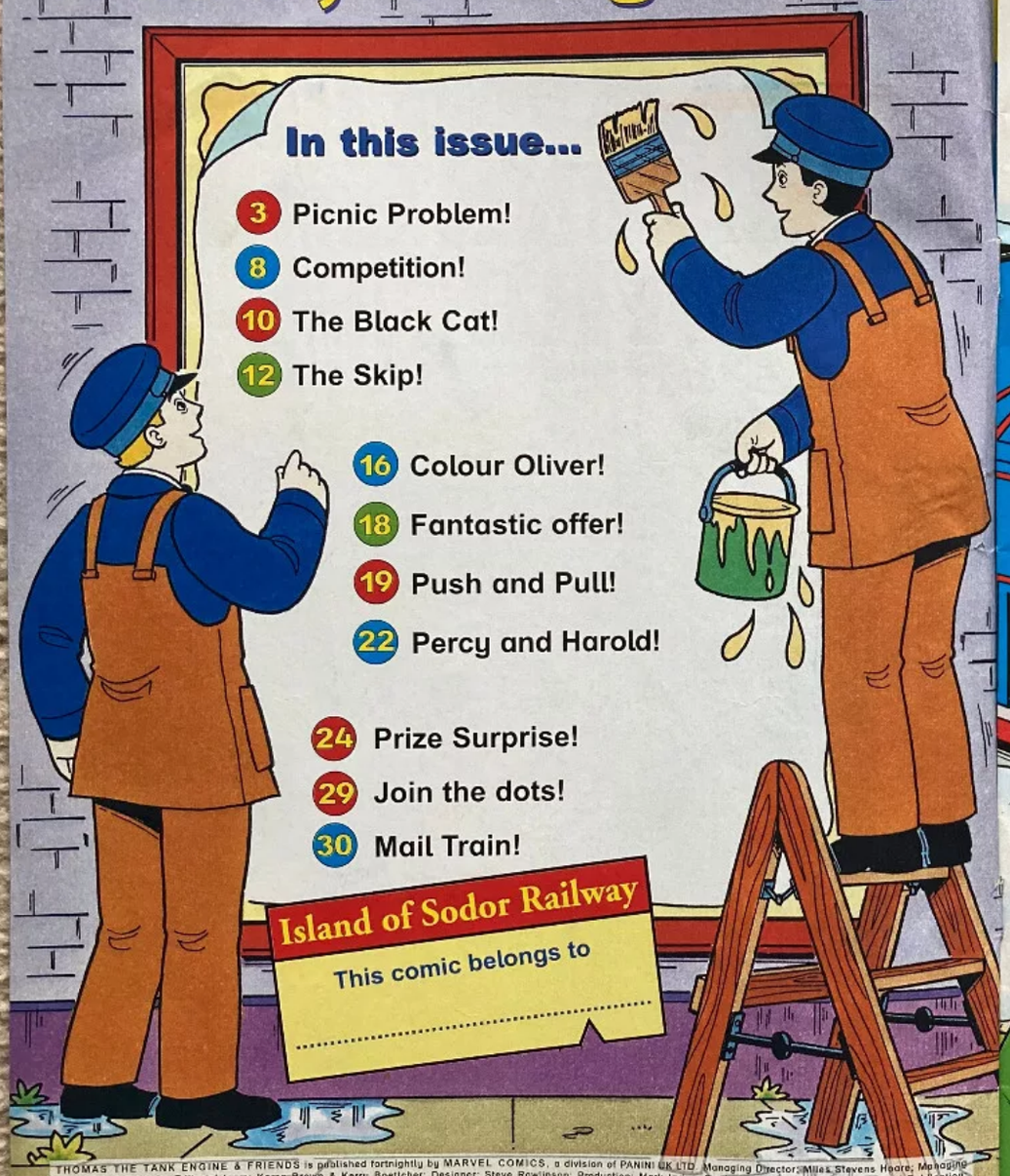
Hello, everybody!



In this issue...

3 Picnic Problem!
8 Competition!
10 The Black Cat!
12 The Skip!
16 Colour Oliver!
18 Fantastic offer!
19 Push and Pull!
22 Percy and Harold!
24 Prize Surprise!
29 Join the dots!
30 Mail Train!

Island of Sodor Railway

This comic belongs to .....

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Picnic Problem!

1. One sunny afternoon, as Thomas puffed cheerfully along his branch line, he met Caroline the Car. She was parked under some shady trees, beside a little, winding stream.

2. "Peep! Peep! What a lovely day!" called Thomas, pulling up to wait at a signal. "Parp! Parp!" Caroline tooted in reply. "Just perfect to enjoy a picnic at this beauty spot."

3. “I love to drive here,” Caroline went on. “I can take my time on the quiet country lanes.” Being such a gentle, delicate car, she did not like to rush about on busy roads.

4. The signal changed and Thomas puffed on his way. Later, Caroline finally set off home, too. She saw Thomas again. He was pulling a flat truck with Peter Sam on it.

5. Thomas had to carry the little engine to the Works, for a service. “That was a wonderful picnic,” said Caroline, waiting at a level-crossing. “I can’t imagine anywhere better!”

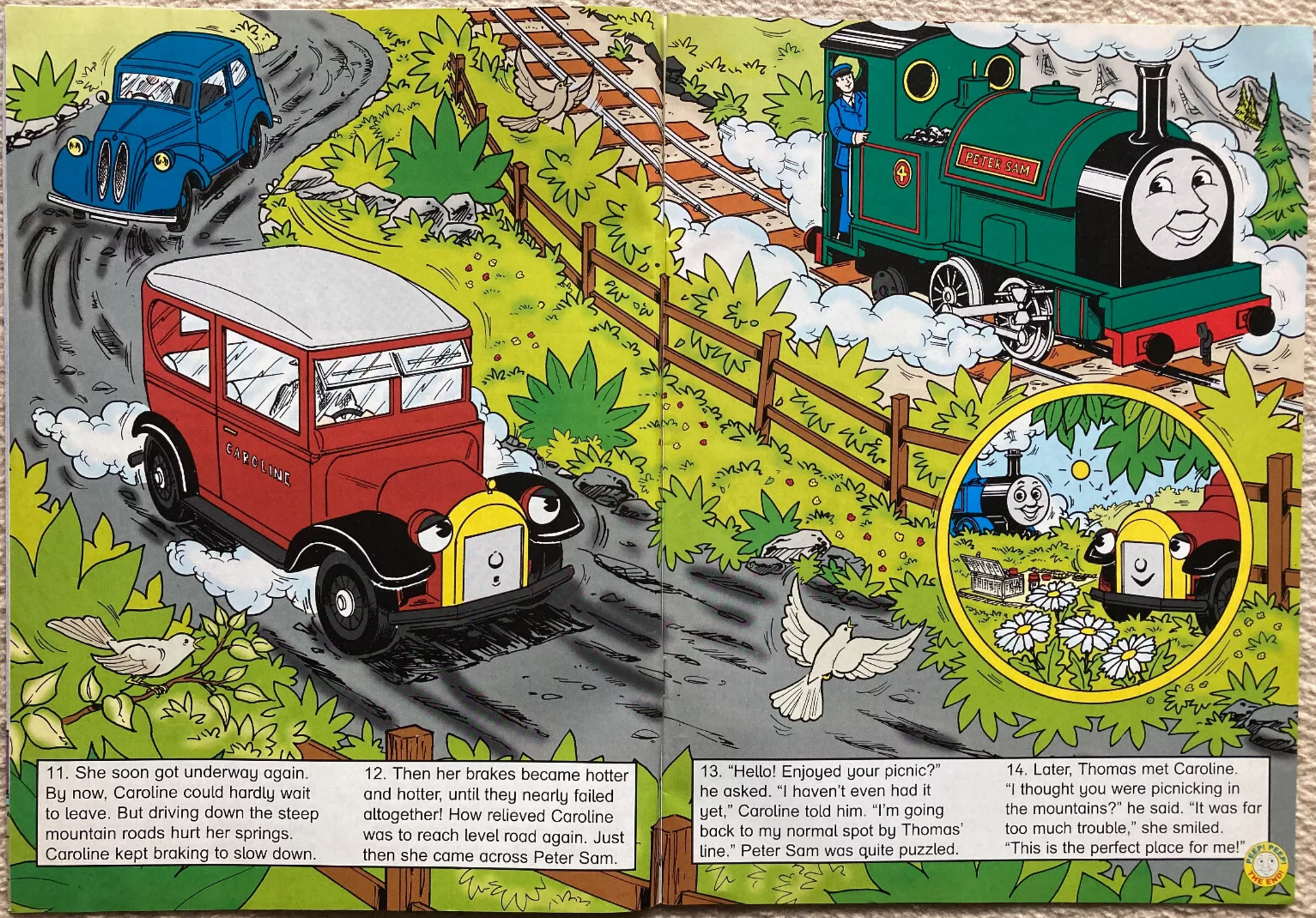
6. “I can,” replied Peter Sam. “The best place for a picnic is up by my little railway, among the mountains and lakes.” “Perhaps I’ll try it,” said Caroline, driving slowly away.

7. And so she did, just a few days later. The weather was fine as the old, two-door saloon car steadily motored higher and higher. But the roads were very steep and tiring.

8. Other cars wanted to go faster than Caroline. She became very hot and bothered when they tried to push past her, tooting impatiently. “I’m doing my best!” she puffed.

9. Caroline’s motor struggled and strained. Soon she began to puff out black smoke behind her. Then steam hissed from her radiator. “I’m overheating! I must stop,” she cried.

10. Caroline managed to roll to a halt by a lake, near the road. But her handbrake was not on firmly and her front wheels splashed into the water. She quickly cooled down!



11. She soon got underway again. By now, Caroline could hardly wait to leave. But driving down the steep mountain roads hurt her springs. Caroline kept braking to slow down.

12. Then her brakes became hotter and hotter, until they nearly failed altogether! How relieved Caroline was to reach level road again. Just then she came across Peter Sam.

13. "Hello! Enjoyed your picnic?" he asked. "I haven't even had it yet," Caroline told him. "I'm going back to my normal spot by Thomas' line." Peter Sam was quite puzzled.

14. Later, Thomas met Caroline. "I thought you were picnicking in the mountains?" he said. "It was far too much trouble," she smiled. "This is the perfect place for me!"

PEEP! PEEP! THE END!

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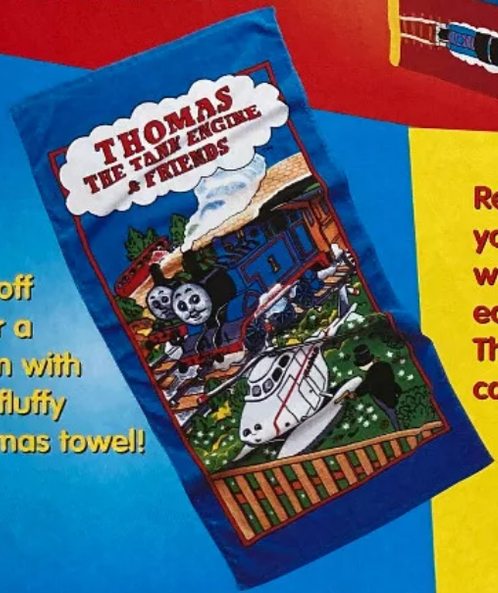

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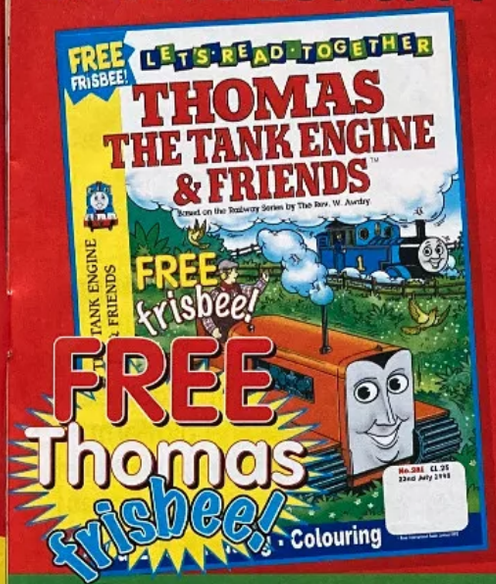
In issue 281 of . . .



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The Black Cat!

One morning, Percy was happily watching a cheeky black cat climbing around over the junk by the Main Shed.

Later he saw the same cat on the station platform. Percy felt very smart as he had just been washed and polished. He was getting ready to take his passengers down to the coast. "Miaow miaow!" the cat purred cheerfully to Percy. But spoilsport Diesel was nearby. "Be careful," he said in his oily voice. "Black cats are bad luck if they cross your path!"

"Miaow miaow!" the black cat scampered across the platform, and walked across the path of a porter who was pushing a goods trolley. Surprised to see the cat, the guard crashed the trolley,

and a lot of time was wasted putting the parcels back. "Oh dear, bad luck!" said Percy.

A little while later Percy could see the black cat in the distance, crossing the line over the footbridge. "Miaow miaow," said the cat. "More bad luck!" Percy groaned. At that moment he heard his driver shouting. There was something wrong with one of Percy's pistons! The passengers had to wait while some men came to fix it.

Finally he was ready to go. "What a late start!" thought Percy, "and what a shame that such a nice little cat can bring bad luck!"

There had been bad weather along the coast all week, and as Percy battled through the wind, it got worse and worse. Suddenly he saw a man up ahead, waving a red flag. "Goodness me!" thought Percy, "What now?"

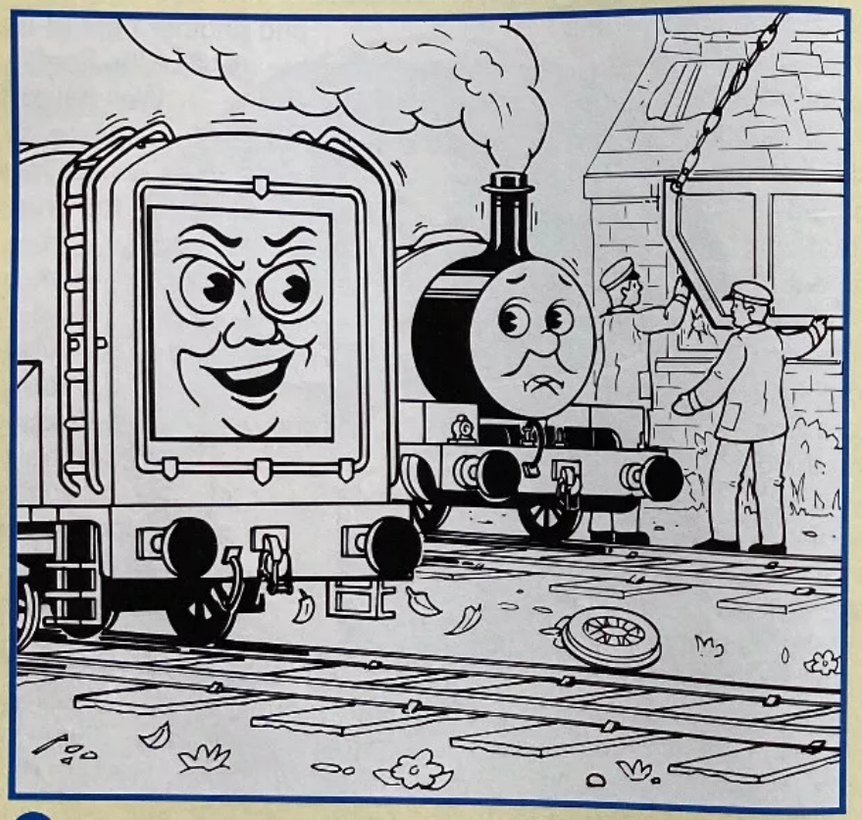
"I'm afraid you can't go any further," said the man. "The weather has caused two landslides. One has just happened around the corner, and another right at the end of the line!"

"Well haven't we been lucky!" said the driver. "Just think, if we hadn't been delayed at the station by that cat, we would be further up the line now, trapped between two landslides and caught in all this rain!"

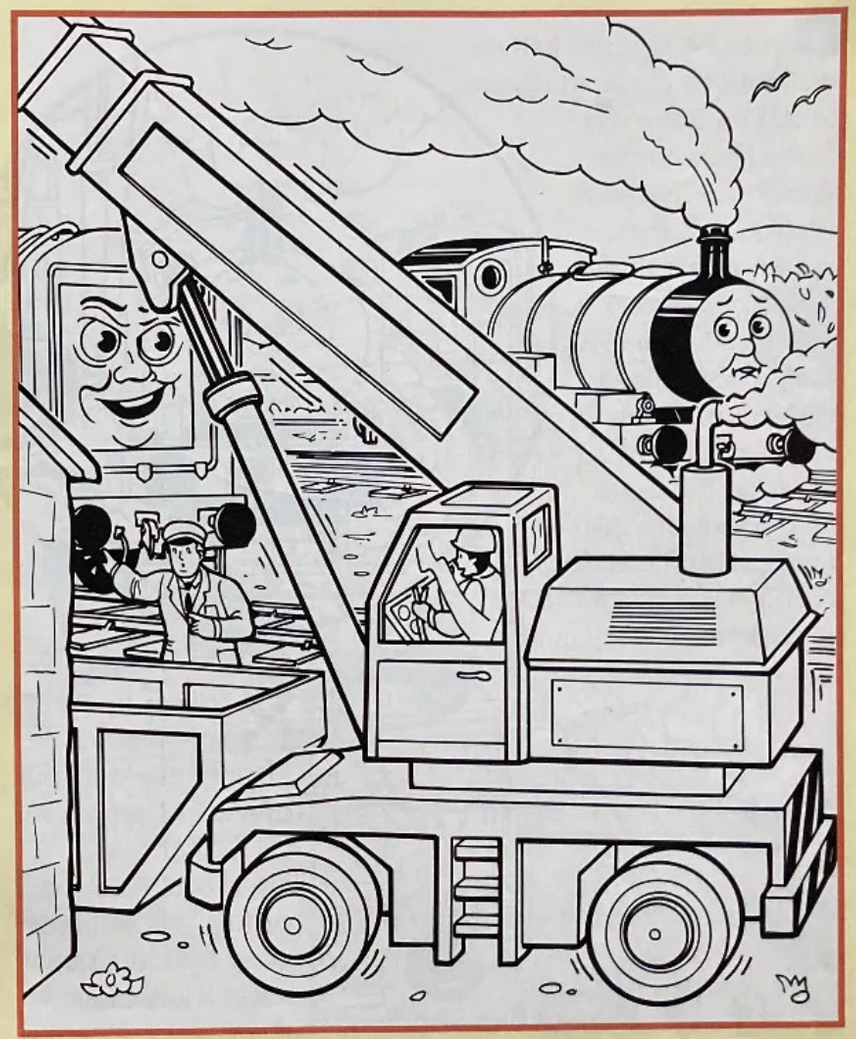
Just then the black cat popped up again. "Miaow miaow!" he called out to Percy. "Peeeep!" he whistled back. That night he was very pleased to be warm and snug in his shed, instead of stuck out on the track in the rain. And he was very happy that he had found a black cat that brought him good luck, instead of bad!

A read & colour story

The Skip!

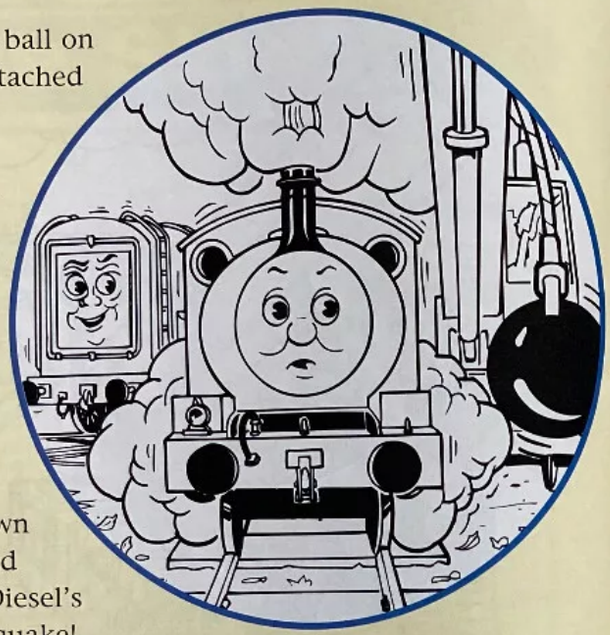


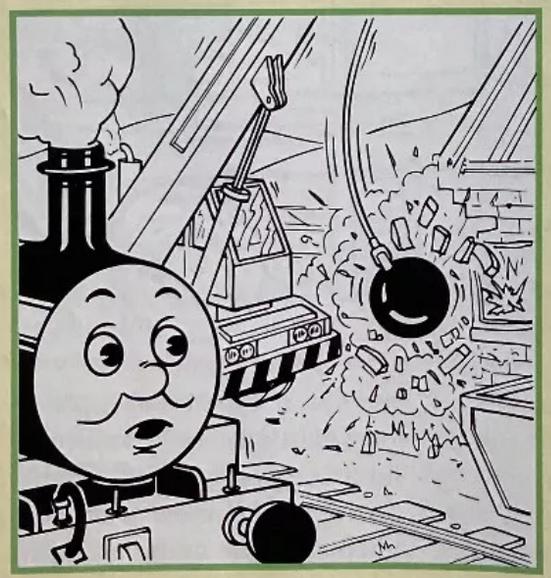
1 One day, Percy and Diesel were shunting in the goods yard when a huge rubbish skip was delivered by a lorry. It was placed in front of an old building and Percy looked at it suspiciously. "What on earth is that?" he whistled. Diesel explained, "It's called a skip. It's like a giant rubbish bin." Then he laughed wickedly and added, "but I can't see any rubbish around here apart from you Percy, and you'd fit in there very nicely indeed!"



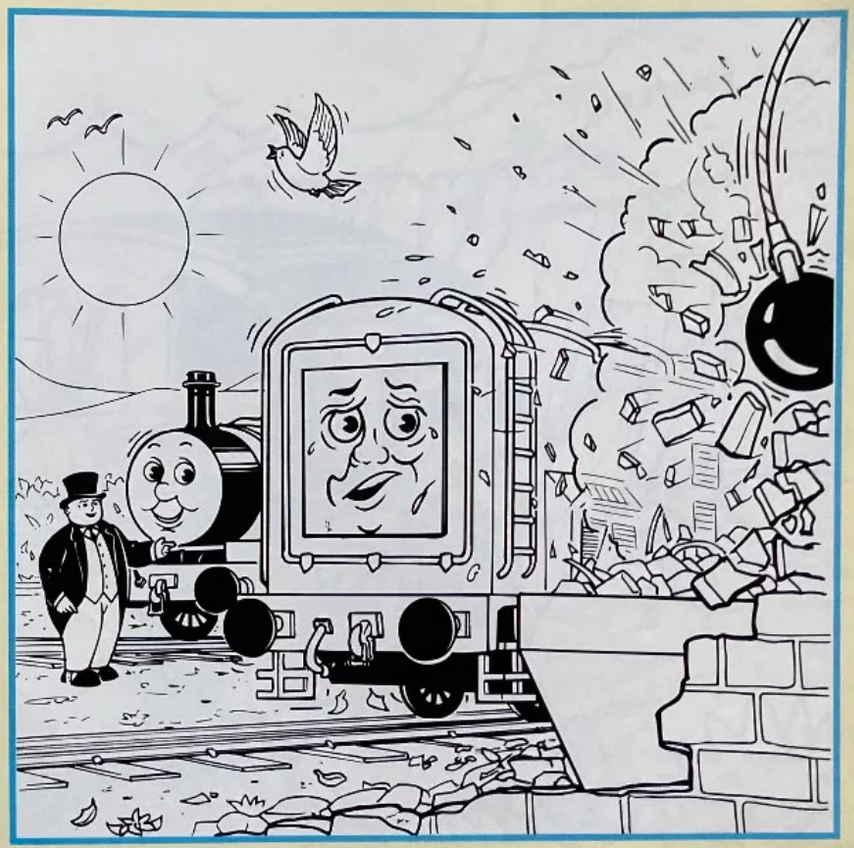
2 Percy shuddered and hurried off with Diesel calling after him, "They've come to take you away!" Percy's driver smiled and said, "Don't worry, Percy. It's just Diesel's little joke!" Little Percy wasn't so sure! Soon he was back in the yard for some more trucks when a mobile crane arrived.

3 It had a big iron ball on the end of a chain attached to it. The crane was parked next to the skip. Percy looked at it anxiously and puffed, "That thing looks dangerous." "That's because it *is* dangerous," Diesel cackled in his oily voice. "It's used for breaking things up before they are thrown in the skip!" he added nastily. Once again Diesel's remark made Percy quake!





4 "Cheer up Percy, he's only teasing! Engines don't get put into skips!" his driver said. Later that afternoon, Percy was resting in a siding far away from the skip when a loud noise made him jump. The crane had started up and was knocking the old building down. "Phew! So that's what it's for," Percy laughed.



5 Meanwhile, Diesel was shunting very close to the action and clouds of dust covered him. He looked crossly over to Percy and growled, "I could do with some help!" Percy laughed and replied, "I'm not going near that skip and that ball and chain after what you told me this morning!" The Fat Controller had been keeping an eye on the work and he decided that it was time for a joke with Diesel. He winked at Percy and called loudly, "I want you to go to the harbour and fetch a giant skip. It's just the right size for our scruffy friend Diesel!"

The end

HAROLD
11
GWR
Colour Oliver!

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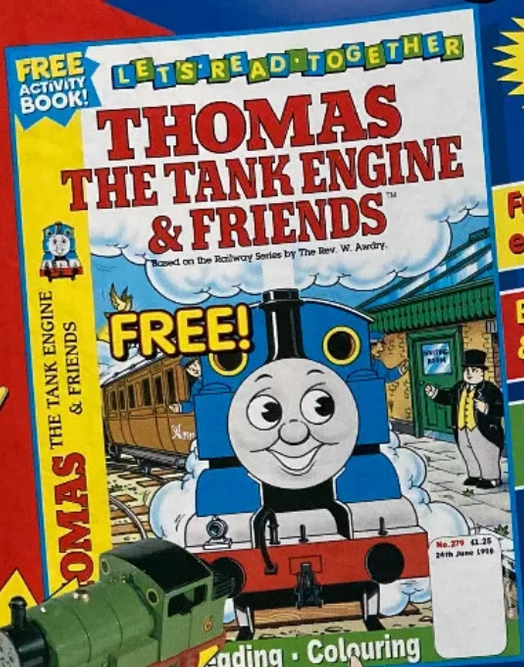
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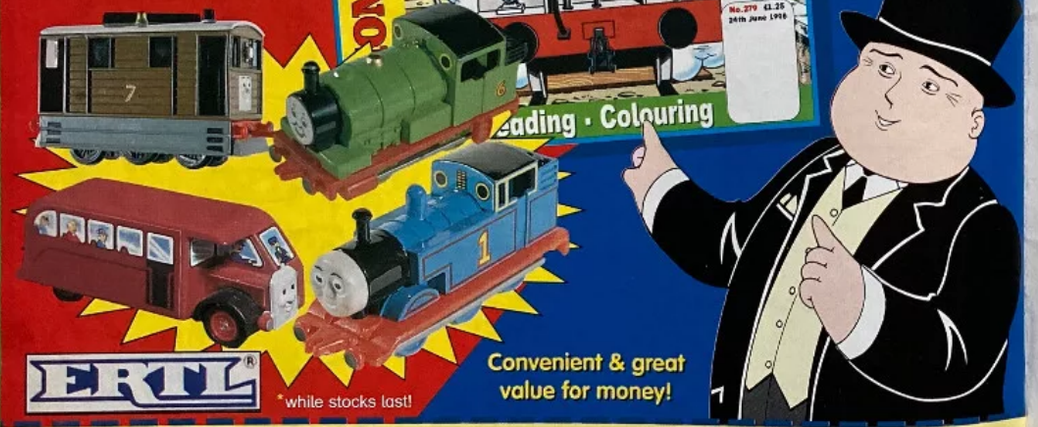

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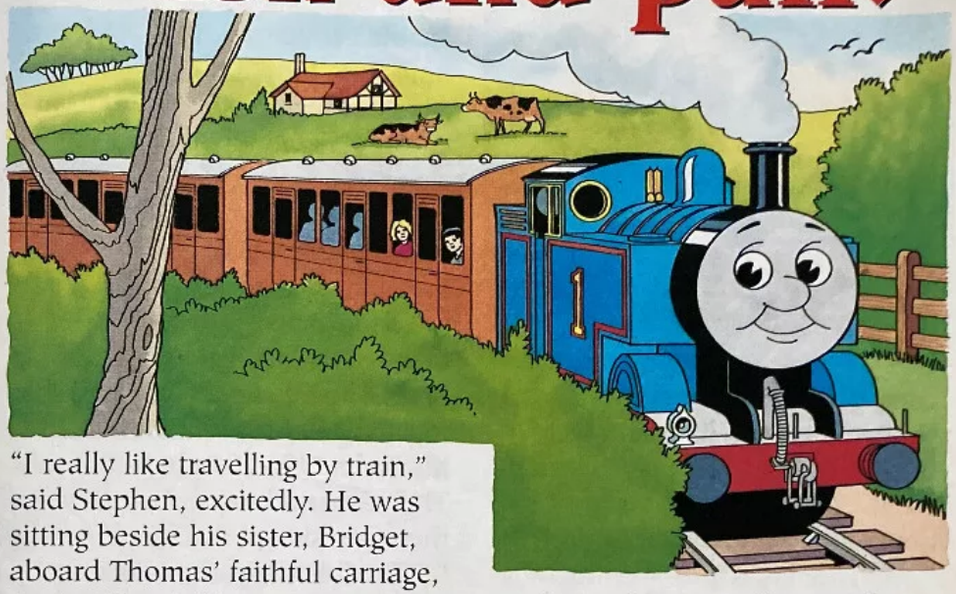
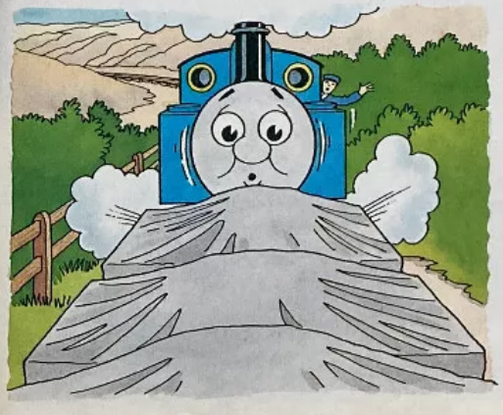


"I really like travelling by train," said Stephen, excitedly. He was sitting beside his sister, Bridget, aboard Thomas' faithful carriage, Annie. The children were enjoying the trip on the little tank engine's afternoon passenger train. "Peep! PEEEEP!" whistled Thomas, as he pulled Annie and Clarabel through the countryside along his branch line.



Everything went fine on the outward journey. Thomas steamed happily up the line. Clackety-clack! Clackety-clack went his whizzing wheels.

On the way back, Thomas saw Percy just ahead. He was coupled to some trucks. They were full of goods that Percy had collected from a factory. Just then Percy stopped. His driver waved anxiously and Thomas pulled up, with a squeal of brakes. "Oh, no! I think Percy's broken down," said Stephen, watching from the carriage window. He was right. What's more, Percy's load had to be delivered urgently.

So Thomas agreed to pull

Percy's trucks as well as his own carriages. Luckily, there was a siding close-by. His trucks were uncoupled and Thomas collected them. "Poor Thomas has a double load now," said Bridget. "I hope Thomas is strong enough," she added.

Thomas puffed along much more steadily. Shortly, he approached a steep hill. His fireman shovelled extra coal into the firebox to help the little tank engine get up steam. Thomas huff-puff-chuffed towards the hill as fast as he could manage.

But halfway up, he almost came to a stop! His load was so heavy that his wheels slipped. "Keep going, Thomas!" said Stephen, as Annie lurched uncomfortably. "I'm sure he'll make it," added Bridget. Straining hard, Thomas finally reached the top. "Wow! I bet he nearly burst his boiler," said Stephen. But now Thomas could enjoy racing down the other side of the hill.

The following afternoon, the children and their grandmother, Lady Hatt, joined a group of walkers on a countryside trek. They all carried knapsacks filled

with refreshments and waterproof clothes just in case it rained.

After a while, everyone came to a very steep hill. "Phew! Going up there will be hard work," puffed Bridget. "I know how to make it easier," said Stephen. "I'll pretend I'm a tank engine. Remember how Thomas climbed the hill, yesterday?" "What a good idea," said his sister. "You lead and I'll follow."

So Stephen set off. But he had not gone far when he felt someone tugging from behind. He glanced around and saw it was Bridget. She was holding on to his knapsack. "Hey! Let go!" protested Stephen. "You're slowing me down." "Don't be a spoilsport," smiled his sister. "Seeing as you're Thomas, I thought I'd be Annie or Clarabel. Now you can pull me up the hill." "Very funny! I wish you'd pretend to be another engine instead," puffed Stephen. "Then you could be Really Useful and give me a push!"

THE END

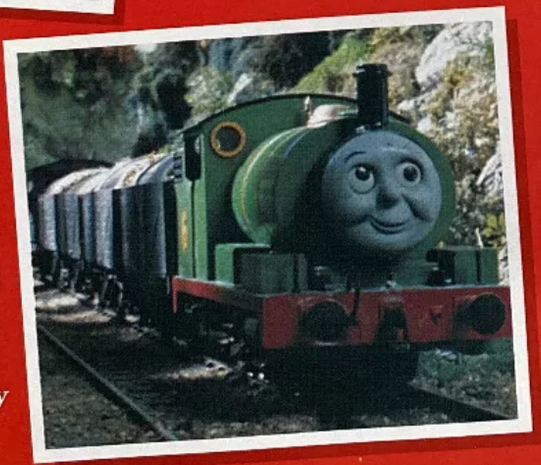
Percy and Harold!

Based on *The Railway Series* by the Rev W Awdry.

Percy worked hard at the new harbour moving loads of heavy stone. There was an airfield close to the harbour. Percy heard aeroplanes zooming overhead all day. The noisiest of all was a helicopter which hovered up above, buzzing like an angry bee.

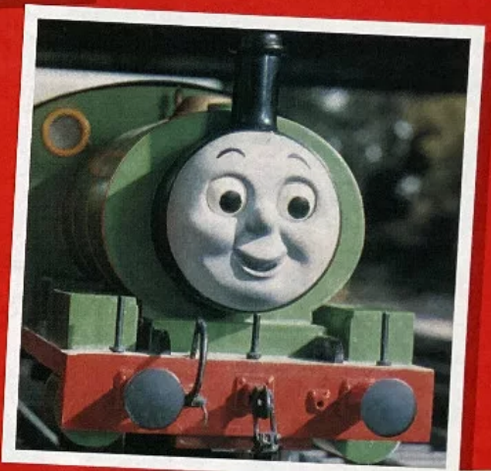
1 One day Percy saw the helicopter at the airfield. "Hello, who are you?" he asked. "I'm Harold," said the helicopter. "Who are you?" "I'm Percy. What whirly great arms you've got." "I can hover like a bird. Don't you wish you could hover?" "Certainly not, I like my rails," replied Percy.

2 "Railways are slow and out of date," said Harold as he buzzed away. Percy was fuming. Soon he heard the buzzing again. "Let's race Harold," whispered Percy's driver. Percy quickly gathered speed and steamed off down the line. There was Harold above. The race was on. Percy never ran so fast in his life!



3 "Well done, Percy. We're going ahead!" shouted his driver. The harbour wharf was near, so Percy had to stop. Percy was worried. He was sure he'd lost the race, but then he saw Harold above still looking for a place to land. "We've won!" exclaimed the fireman.

4 Then he said, "Now here's a song for Percy: *Said Harold the Helicopter to our Percy, 'You are slow! Your railway is out of date and not much use you know.' But Percy, with his stone trucks, did the trip in record time. And we beat the helicopter on our old branch line!"* "Oh, thank you," said Percy. He liked the last line best of all.



In Thomas the Tank Engine & Friends next time, you can read the story "Pop goes the Diesel!"

Win a model of Harold!

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Just send a postcard, with your name, age and address to: Thomas/280 model competition, Marvel Comics, Panini House, Coach and Horses Passage, The Pantiles, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN2 5UJ.
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Prize Surprise!

1. The Fat Controller worked long hours to make sure his railway ran really efficiently. But whenever he arrived home in time, he liked to watch one special television show.

2. It was a quiz. The contestants were asked questions on all sorts of subjects. The winner won a Mystery Prize. "I'm sure you would do really well," Lady Hatt told her husband.

3. "You know so much about engines," she added. "I'll write to the show tonight," agreed the Fat Controller. Next day, Thomas took the letter aboard the post train.

4. "It's very important," the Fat Controller told him. "That letter is going to the TV studios." Thomas puffed proudly on his way, glad to be chosen for an important job.

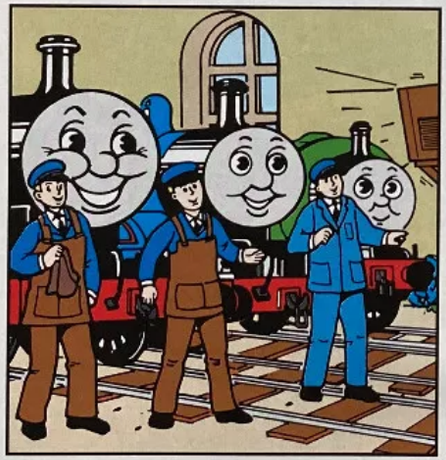
5. "I wonder if the Fat Controller is making a programme about the railway," Thomas thought dreamily. "Imagine! I might become the first ever engine star!" he thought.

6. Later, Thomas told all the other engines. They wanted to appear on television too. A week later, a reply from the studios was brought to the Main Station for the Fat Controller.

7. He had been at his desk since early morning. He was much too busy to open the letter immediately. When he did, he rushed out on to the platform, waving it about.

8. "Great news, everyone!" he cried. "I've been picked to take part in a TV quiz." "Oh, congratulations sir," replied Thomas, trying not to look disappointed. He felt foolish, too.

9. The other engines teased him. But Thomas soon cheered up when he had to carry the Fat Controller and Lady Hatt to the station by the studios. "Good luck," he called.



10. At the Main Station, he and the other engines watched the quiz on television with all their crews. At last, the quiz host called the Fat Controller before the cameras.

11. While a huge clock ticked away, he was asked lots of questions about signals, engines old and new, plus different railway carriages. All the Fat Controller's answers were right. "Well done! You have won the Mystery Prize!" the host announced, opening an envelope. The Fat Controller could hardly wait to hear as the host pulled out a small card.

12. The host stared in surprise. "Of all things!" he said. "You've won a day trip on your own railway! What bad luck!" The engines and staff at the Main Station couldn't believe it either. Meanwhile, on the television, the Fat Controller smiled. "It's a perfect prize!" he said. "I never normally get time to enjoy being a passenger. I'm really looking forward to my train trip!"

PEEP! PEEP! THE END!

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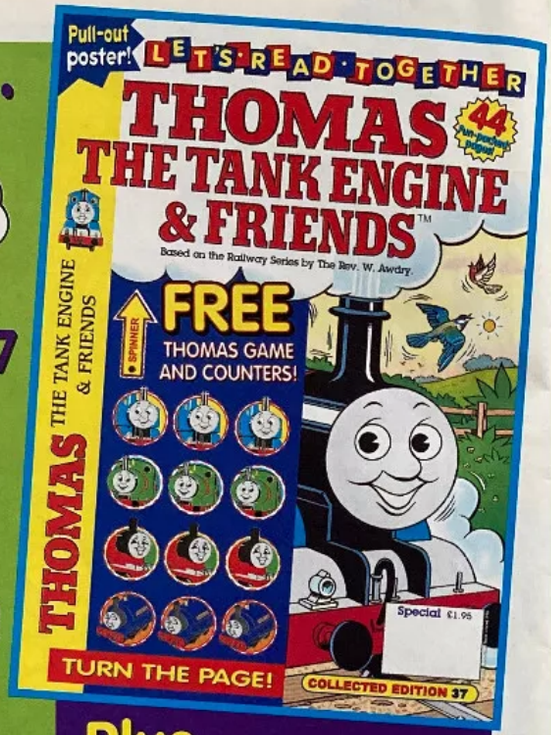

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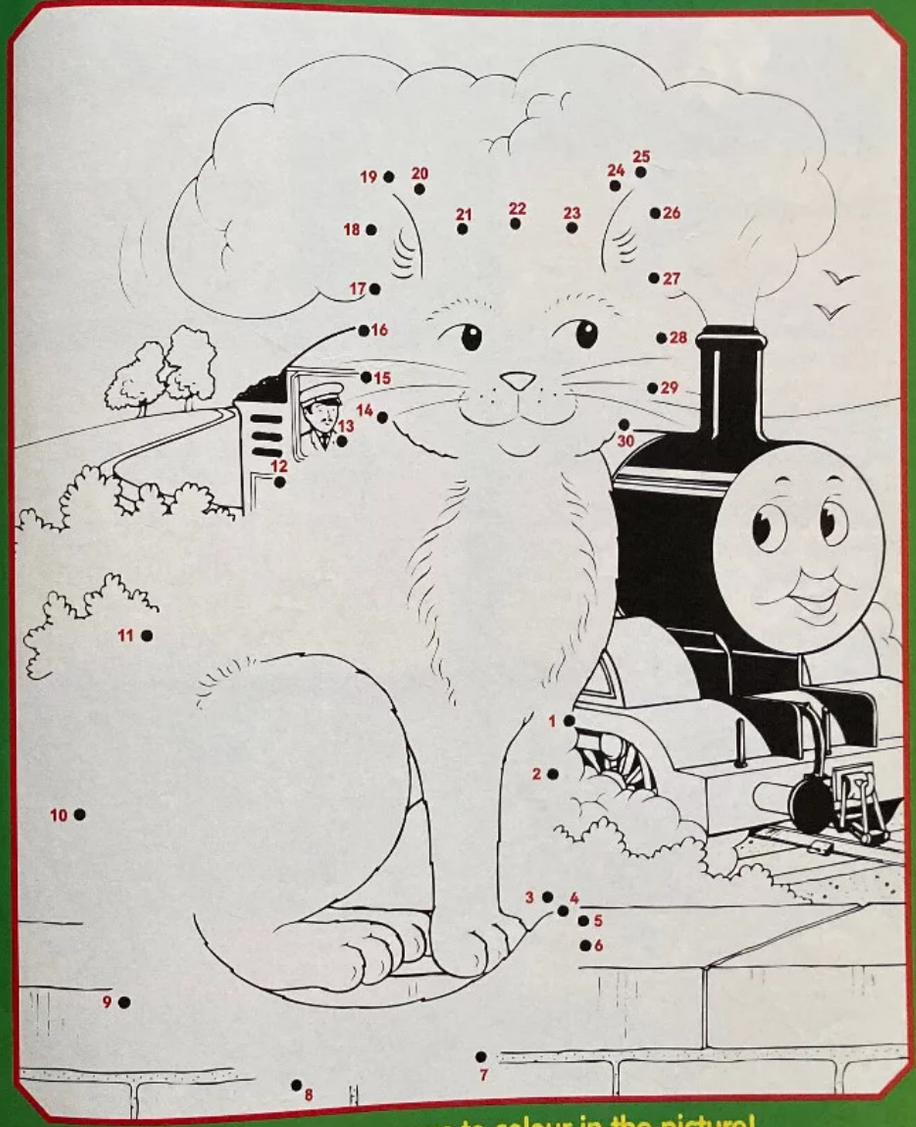
Available from all leading newsagents and supermarkets!

On sale 2nd July 1998!

Dot to dot!

Who is sitting on the wall? Join the dots to see it all!



Now use your crayons to colour in the picture!

The mail train!

Please send your letters, pictures and drawings to Mail Train, Thomas, Marvel Comics, Panini House, Coach and Horses Passage, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN2 5UJ.

Star Letter

Dear Fat Controller,
I have a puzzle with a green engine with the number eleven on it. I ask my mummy what his name is every day but she doesn't know. I am sure you will be able to tell me his name.
From Jake Collins, aged 3½

Yes, indeed, Jake, the engine you are referring to is Oliver. He used to work on the Mainland and was saved from scrap by Douglas. He now works happily on Duck's branch line.

If we print your STAR LETTER, you will receive a BRIO wooden playtrack as a prize!

8 year old Dean Punter has drawn a picture of the Chinese Dragon that frightened Percy!

Prize Poem!

Thank you to Stephen Noble, aged 7, for this poem about Percy!

Percy puffs along all day,
This is all he has to say,
"I hope it's time for bed."
But it isn't, so he works instead!

Anyone who has a drawing printed on this page will win a special Thomas Kaleidoscope!

Diesel's having trouble with some trucks in this drawing by Thomas Bywater, aged 6!

Kush Madlani, aged 4, has painted this cheerful picture of little Percy!

Rusty's helping out with some trucks. By Alex Gridley, aged 6!

Happy Birthday!

Lee Phillips, aged 7, Stephie Parker, aged 2, James Newell, aged 7, and Damien Edsall, aged 4.

Also to Caitlin Zaret, aged 3, and belated birthday wishes to Timothy Edward Clarke, aged 4!

Peep! Peep!

Daniel and Stephen Austin!

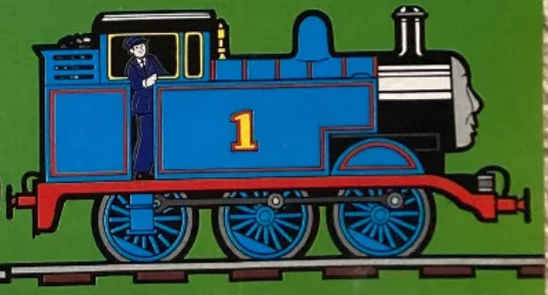
James Mulhearn, aged 3½!

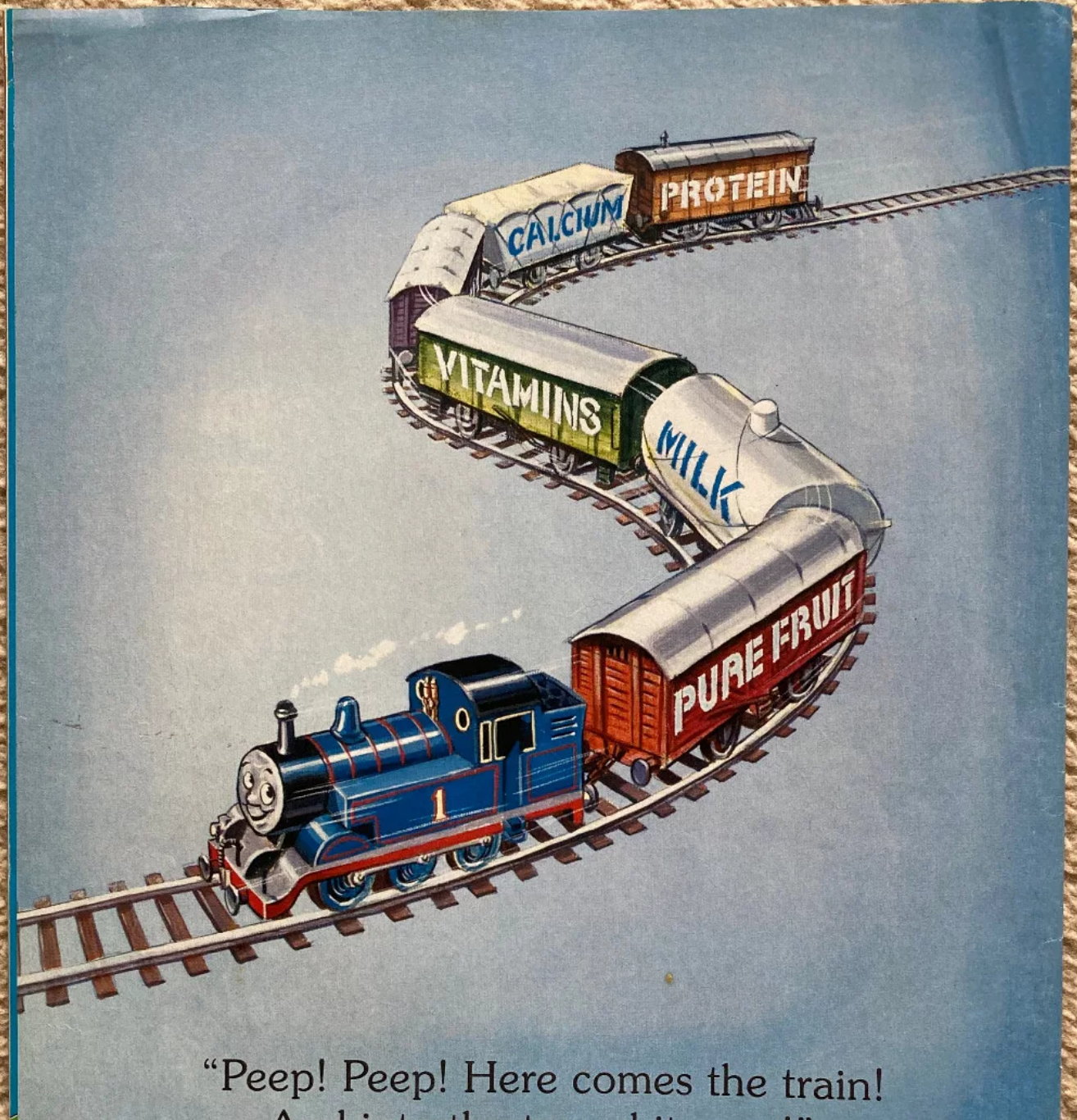
Rhys and Amy Poulton and Sam and Jessica Baker!

Wesley Wade, aged 4!

Matthew Hoyle, aged 4!

Liam and Aaron, aged 2!

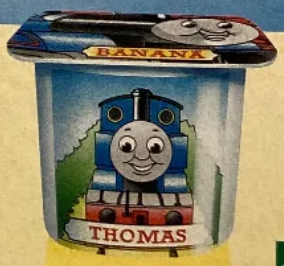




"Peep! Peep! Here comes the train!
And into the tunnel it goes!"

THE new Thomas the Tank Engine range of yogurts and fromages frais are loaded up with all the right goodies, and that includes vitamins and calcium for growing bones and teeth.

Made from whole milk and pure, smooth natural fruit purée, they make the perfect first foods for young Thomas's, Henry's, Annie's and Clarabel's everywhere. Mummy will be chuffed.



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